[FRIDAY] *May* 16, 1766. RIND. NUMB. 1.

VIRGINIA GAZETTE.

Open to ALL PARTIES, but Influenced by NONE.

TO enter into a minute Detail of the Advantages of a well conducted NEWSPAPER, would, at any Time, be impertinent, but more especially at a Crisis, which makes a quick Circulation of Intelligence peculiarly interesting to all the AMERICAN COLONIES. It will be more to the Purpose therefore to communicate to the Public a brief Account of the Nature of our Plan, without entering into a formal Proof of it's Utility, which we esteem little less than self-evident.

We propose to print this GAZETTE in every Friday, to contain a faithful Account of remarkable foreign Occurrences; Materials for which we shall be amply furnished with, in Consequence of a general Correspondence we have established for that Purpose. Remarkable domestic Occurrences, with exact Lists of all Entries and Clearances, Accounts of Exports and Imports, and such Proceedings of the Legislature, and Courts of Justice, as may conduce to the Benefit or Entertainment of our Readers, shall find a Place in our Publications. All useful or entertaining, Schemes for the Advancement of TRADE, ARTS and MANUFACTURES, Proposals for Improvements in AGRICULTURE, and particularly in the Culture of HEMP and FLAX, shall be received with a high Sense of the Obligation, and inserted with Pleasure and Alacrity.

As the Interests of RELIGION and LIBERTY, we shall ever think it our peculiar Duty to support; and, at the same Time, to treat with Contempt the intemperate Effusions of factious Zealots, whether religious or political, as Enemies to Virtue, and the Peace of Civil Order. With the Haven shall we exhibit every Proposition to make our Paper a Vehicle for the evil Purposes of private Malice, by propagating Calumnies against Men, wounding the Peace of Families, and inflaming the Minds of Men with Bitterness and Rancour against one another.

In a Word, we will spare neither Cost nor Pains to make our Paper as useful and entertaining as possible; and, while these Objects are steadily pursued, the Publisher will confidently rely upon the known Generosity and Public Spirit of the Gentlemen of this Colony, for their Countenance and Support to such a useful Undertaking.

To Mr. WILLIAM RIND.

Lead's-Town, March 1, 1766.

SIR,

YOUR publishing an Account of the following Proceedings of the Sons of Liberty in this Colony, will oblige many, and early Instance of your Determination to support the FREEDOM of your PRESS.

A CERTAIN *Archibald Ritchie*, of *Hobb's-Hole*, Merchant, having declared publicly at RICHMOND Court, That he was determined to clear out his Vessels on Stamp'd Paper; at the same Time saying, that he knew where to get such Paper: Enraged at the said *Ritchie's* matchless Impudence, in making such a Declaration, and alarmed at the dangerous Consequences, that such an iniquitous Practice might be productive of to the Liberty of their Country, if other Merchants should pursue so pernicious an Example; a Number of Gentlemen met at *Lead's-Town* on the Twenty-seventh of last Month, in the Evening, to consider of what Measures it would be necessary to take, against a Man who was thus attempting to introduce a Law so destructive to the Community. At this Place they chose a Committee to regulate their Plan of Operations, who drew up the following Scheme of an Association, viz.

WE who subscribe this Paper, *do* associate, *and* in the sight of God, *bind* ourselves to each other, to GOD and to our COUNTRY, by the firmest Ties that Religion and Virtue can frame, most sacredly and punctually to stand by, and with our Lives and Fortunes to support, maintain, and defend, each other, in the Observation and Execution of these following Articles:

I. *WE* declare all due Allegiance and Obedience to our lawful Sovereign GEORGE the Third, King of Great-Britain, and we determine, to the utmost of our Power, to preserve the Laws, Peace and good Order of this Colony, as far as is consistent with the Preservation of our constitutional Rights and Liberties.

II. *AS* we know it to be the Birthright Privilege of every British Subject (and of the People of Virginia as being such) founded on Reason, Law and Compact, that he cannot be legally tried but by his Peers, and that he cannot be taxed, but by Consent of a Parliament, in which he is represented by Persons of his own choosing, who themselves pay a Part of the Tax they impose on others: If therefore, any Person shall attempt, by any Action or Proceeding, to Aprove this Colony of those fundamental Rights, we will immediately regard him as the most dangerous Enemy of this Community, and we will go to any Extremity, not only to prevent the Success of such Attempts, but to stigmatize and punish the Offender.

III. *AS* the Stamp-Act does absolutely divest the Property of the People to be taken from them without their Consent, expressed by their Representatives, and as in many Cases it deprives the British American Subject of his Right to Trial by Juries, we do determine, at every Hazard, paying no regard to Danger, or to Death, that we will exert every Faculty, to prevent the Execution of the said Stamp-Act, in any Instance whatever within this Colony; and that if any abandoned Wretch, shall be so lost to Virtue, and public Good, as wickedly to contribute to the Introduction or Fixture of the Stamp-Act in this Colony, by using Stamp'd Paper, or by any other Means, we will, with the utmost Expedition, convince every such Profligate, that immediate Danger and Disgrace shall attend their prostitute Purpose.

IV. *THAT* the last Article may be most surely and effectually executed, we engage each to the other, that whenever it shall be known to any of this Association, that any Person is so conducting himself, as to favour the Introduction of the Stamp-Act, that immediate Notice shall be given to as many of the Association as possible, and that every Individual so informed, shall with Expedition repair to a Place of Meeting, to be appointed as near the Scene of Action as may be.

V. *EACH* Associator shall do his true Endeavour, to obtain as many Signers to this Association as he possibly can.

VI. *IF* any Attempt shall be made upon the Liberty, or Property of any Associator for any Action or Thing to be done in Consequence of this Agreement; we do most solemnly bind ourselves, by the sacred Engagements above entered into, at the utmost Risque of our Lives and Fortunes, to restore such Associate to his Liberty, and to protect him in the Enjoyment of his Property.

IN Testimony of the good Faith with which we resolve to execute this Association, we have hereunto put our Hands and Seals. *Virginia*, 27th *February*, 1766.

THIS Association was immediately signed by the whole Company, and by great Numbers since. The Committee also prepared a Declaration, to be made, signed, and sworn to, by the said *Ritchie*, and came to a Resolution, that if he should refuse to sign and make Oath to the same, his Person should be taken and stripped naked to his Waist, tied to the Tail of a Cart, and drawn to the public Pillory, where he should be fixed for one Hour, and if in that Time he did not comply, that he should be brought up by the whole Company to *Lead's-Town*, there to be farther determined on, as should seem expedient to the Friends of Liberty.

THE next Day the whole Company proceeded to *Hobb's-Hole*, where they were joined by a large Number, who had assembled from the adjacent Counties on the South Side of *Rappahannock*, in order to call the said *Ritchie* to Account for having presumed to throw out the Threat aforesaid.

THE Sons of Liberty, to the Amount of Four Hundred, drew up in Two Lines, in the main Street of the Town, whilst the Gentlemen appointed by the Committee for that Purpose, went to the House of the said *Ritchie*, and agreeable to their Instructions, read to him the Declaration prepared for him, and required him to go with them to the main Body, in order to read, sign and swear, to the same. He at first desired that a Committee might be appointed to reason with him upon the Subject, but the Deputies informed him, that the Expiation required of him, was already determined on; and demanded an immediate Answer, Whether he would willingly attend them to the main Body, or not? He answering that he would, they immediately conducted him thither; where being arrived, he at first complained that the Terms propoſed were too severe; but the Sons of Liberty calling out that they were